

Approved For Release 1999/08/24 : CIA-RDP78-02771R000500510001-7

25X1A9a  
25X1A8a

25X1A2g

Approved For Release 1999/08/24 : CIA-RDP78-02771R000500510001-7

**THE COMMUNIST LABOR TRAP**

**August 1959**

### THE COMMUNIST LABOR TRAP

The infiltration of labor unions throughout the entire world to convert them into instruments of Communist dreams for world domination has long been one of Moscow's prime objectives. Thousands of workers in many lands have been taken in by the Communist labor stratagems despite the fact that there has never been any attempt by Moscow to hide its intentions.

Lenin, for instance, writing in "Leftwing Communist: An Infantile Disorder," in 1920 made the following forthright remarks. He said: "The Communists must be prepared to resort to all sorts of cunning schemes and stratagems, to use illegal methods, to evade and conceal the truth, in order to penetrate into trade unions, to remain in them and to conduct the Communist work in them at all costs."

Since that time there has been no need for the Communists to be told again that they must enter the trade unions and resort to subterfuges to carry on their work in them. During the years that have elapsed since Lenin wrote these words many scores of highly trained Communist labor experts have devoted years of hard study to the development of penetration techniques and to the ways and means of exploiting trade unions.

In Lenin's time it was assumed that trade union work was to prepare the ground for revolution. That has passed and today the only objectives of Communist trade union work are to serve Soviet foreign policy and to strengthen Communist influence in the trade unions for their own purposes. Communist labor union tactics imply a considerable degree of cynicism in the leadership and are completely at variance with the aspirations of those of the rank and file who are inspired with a feeling of loyalty to the working classes.

There is invariably some element of politics in every Communist-inspired strike and at times this has even been admitted, at least in previous years. On numerous occasions the Communists have called for strikes as part of a maneuver to overthrow a government. But experience has shown that the worker more often than not is unwilling to strike for such purposes and more recently Communist trade union agitation purports to be concerned, not with political objectives,

but with wages and working conditions. This is only on the surface, however, and the political motives are often not apparent to the workers concerned or to the public. They are revealed only in the general attitude of Communists to strikes and in the relation of this attitude to current Soviet policy.

The truth of this may be seen in the examples of France and Italy during the immediate post-war period. At that time it was not part of the Soviet plan to foment labor disturbances in those countries where they had a considerable mass following among the anti-Fascist elements. They were represented in the government and they even had hopes of forming a government themselves and thereby attaining power through parliamentary means. They were, therefore, not anxious to alarm middle class opinion and certainly they did not want to create labor class troubles for which they would be responsible when they came to power. It is also more than likely that they were influenced by the consideration that the greater the recovery of industry, the less the degree of dependence on financial aid from the United States.

The effects of this situation were most noticeable in France where the Party's hopes of parliamentary success were the brightest. The Confederation Generale du Travail, controlled by Communists, put the brake on strikes and steadfastly resisted all demands for higher wages.

However, by late 1947 the Marshall Plan was in operation and the Party line in Western Europe changed abruptly. Disruption of industry and the wrecking of the Plan became the main Communist objectives. In November of that year the Communist leaders of the CGT launched a series of strikes which were the most bitter in French experience, demanding wage increases, the return of the Party to the government on its own terms and France's withdrawal from the Marshall Plan. This was followed by a disastrous and sometimes bloody strike in October 1948 among the coal miners. It ended in defeat from the Soviet point of view in that it slowed down the recovery of French economy and shook world confidence in France's stability at a time when it was most important to strengthen the Western defense system.

In the last decade there have been countless examples of such tactics in scores of countries and to attempt to enumerate them would be repetitious and serve little purpose but to reiterate what is already known. What is important is to have a clear view of what the strategy of Soviet labor policy is and this can best be obtained from studying the pronouncements and activities of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).

The WFTU does not admit to being Communist, although it is a Communist-dominated organization. It hypocritically claims to "organize and unite within its ranks the trade unions of the whole world, irrespective of considerations of race, nationality, religion or political opinion."

When the organization was founded after the war, millions of workers throughout the world hoped that it would live up to this fine-sounding program. However, Communist intrigues and increasing Communist control of the Federation's machinery caused the British Trades Union Congress, the American Congress of Industrial Organizations and the Confederation of Free Trade Unions of the Netherlands to quit it in 1949, soon to be followed by others.

The majority of the member unions are Communist-controlled and the leaders of the minority that are not are under Communist influence. Of the 18 members of the Executive Bureau, 10 are known Communists, four are delegates of Communist-controlled unions or splinter groups and the remaining four are of unknown or undeclared affiliation. According to the figures published by the WFTU, the Communist countries account for 64,600,000 of the 80 million the WFTU claims to represent. This means that four-fifths of the membership is behind the Iron Curtain.

A striking feature of the manifestos, resolutions and appeals by the WFTU is the preponderance of political questions over labor ones. It is clear that the only consistent purpose of these statements is that of undermining the defensive power of any state or group of states opposed to the Soviet Bloc, and it is only in this light that they can be understood. All labor agitation in countries not under the influence of Soviet Russia serves to weaken the potential resistance to Soviet expansion and from this point of view the merits of the workers' case are irrelevant. The resolutions and manifestos of the WFTU and the writings of its chief officials praise all strikes and all forms of labor agitation regardless of their motive.

#### Control of Trade Unions

Communist trade union policy since the war has shown a preference for the national confederation. Communists seek to join and gain control of such bodies rather than set up unions with a Communist label and then rely on their capacity for infiltration to exert a wider influence over labor.

In France, for example, after the war the Communists helped to reestablish the CGT and even while they were intriguing for control, they went to considerable lengths to preserve the fiction that the CGT was non-political and allowed moderate leaders a higher proportion of positions in the executive organs than their following in the unions warranted. In the end it was not the Communists who expelled Leon Jouhaux and his followers, but the latter who left, unable to tolerate their position any longer. Despite this rift, the CGT still claims that it represents all elements of French labor. The same happened in Italy where the Socialists, Republicans and the Christian Democrats broke away and left the Communists in possession of the CGIL.

Once the Communists are entrenched in positions of power in a trade union it is extremely difficult to dislodge them. This has been illustrated by the experience of the Congress of Industrial Organizations in the US. A number of its member unions, including some of the larger and more important ones, have fallen under Communist control, disregarded CIO policy and harassed the CIO leaders. Some of the unions were recaptured from the Communists, but in the end the authority of the CIO could only be asserted by expelling all Communist-dominated unions, 11 of them being expelled during 1949 and 1950.

Generally speaking, the aim of the Communist fraction is to capture, if possible, the secretaryship of the branch or other union body in which they operate. This facilitates the arrangement of the agenda of meetings to suit the Party's aims. The discipline and zeal of the Communist fractions play a large part in securing the election of their candidates to higher union offices, the reason being that many of the other union members do not bother to vote. It is thus possible for the Communists, by diligent work and by taking advantage of every opportunity to increase their share of representation at every stage. A few Communists scattered in a number of branches, say one per cent of the membership, may secure the election of Communists constituting 15 per cent of the district committee. If the district committee can be persuaded to send a Communist to the divisional committee, the disproportion increases.

It is often possible for the Communists to serve political ends while gaining credit as good trade unionists. In times of inflation there is constant unrest and pressure for wage increases and the Communists have only to exploit it. If they act with discretion, they can pose as the champions of the labor movement in general. Even at such times, however,

their efforts to keep industrial conflicts alive at any cost are apt to betray their lack of real interest in the workers and their fate. A frequent feature of Communist tactics are exaggerated demands regarding wages and working hours, the outcome of which will either be rejection and a strike or acceptance, losses in industry and further economic demands.

For the past 40 years the international Communist movement has employed every means to increase its power and to impose its totalitarian ideology on a world it hopes to dominate. Nowhere has this been more true than in the field of organized labor for the obvious reason that Communist theory has always assigned the dominant role in social revolution to industrial workers.

The violent shifts and reversals in international Communist labor policy during the inter-war period had the advantage, from the Communist point of view, of splitting the world trade union movement in general and that of Western Europe in particular. However, at that time the Communists did not make a successful bid for wider penetration. It was the aftermath of the Second World War that provided this opportunity.

In 1945, the Communists saw themselves in a situation which promised an excellent opportunity first to penetrate and then to dominate a world-wide trade union organization, namely the WFTU which was established on October 3, 1945 at a trade unionist conference in Paris, attended by 250 delegates from 56 countries and claiming to speak for some 67 million organized workers.

The skillful maneuvers of the Soviet, Italian, French and Mexican delegates, which led to the selection of Paris as the organization's headquarters, served as an indication of Communist plans, since the location placed the entire administrative machinery of the WFTU in close proximity to the Communist-dominated French Confederation of Labor.

Finally, by supporting pro-Communist Louis Saillant for the post of General Secretary and by securing the appointment of a Soviet nominee as Assistant Secretary for Press and Information, the Soviets had, right from the start, exploited the idealism and spirit of compromise within the other trade unions in order to capture key positions in the WFTU.

The process of disintegration was already underway in 1946 and early 1947 when the WFTU Secretariat made unsuccessful efforts to extend the Federation's operations into Germany and Japan with the apparent purpose of encouraging activities that would embarrass the occupation authorities. The process of disintegration went faster after the June 1947 announcement of the Marshall Plan.

This development was immediately reflected inside the WFTU. The Communist trade unions of France, Italy and Eastern Europe echoed the position and slogans of the Cominform in which democratic unions were attacked as "agents of American imperialism" and "betrayers of trade union unity."

In these circumstances, the democratic unions had no alternative but to fight back, first within the WFTU and finally by breaking with it entirely. The distrust within the WFTU deepened still further after the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia in February 1948. After this, events moved swiftly toward the final break in the WFTU. A mid-September conference of the International Trade Secretariats finally rejected any and all cooperation with the WFTU.

The final meetings of the Federation's Executive Bureau were bitter. The representatives of the British TUC and the American CIO rightly accused General Secretary Saillant of flagrant bias and administrative malfeasance. Protests were lodged against using the WFTU Information Bulletin for the dissemination of misleading and untruthful information.

In October 1948, the General Council of the British Trade Union Congress recommended that the WFTU temporarily suspend all of its operations because it could no longer reach any agreement on what the TUC called "real trade union tasks." A month later, at its Convention in Portland, Oregon, the CIO took similar action and it rejected a proposal to "endorse the WFTU and to make it effective in the United Nations."

At the final joint session of the Executive Bureau of the WFTU which met in Paris in early January 1949, Britain's Arthur Deakin formally presented the TUC proposal of suspension. When the Bureau refused to endorse the recommended course of action, the British TUC, the CIO and the Dutch unions walked out of the meeting and were later followed by the other non-Communist labor unions.

Thus the WFTU was left wholly in the hands of the Communists. It became nothing more than a Communist front organization, serving the interests of the Soviet Union and



acting according to the dictates of the Cominform. The present headquarters of the WFTU are located in Prague where they were transferred from Vienna in February 1956. The headquarters had been transferred from Paris to Vienna in 1951 when the French Government ordered its expulsion for subversive activities. For the next five years, the WFTU took refuge in the Soviet-occupied sector of Vienna, but as soon as Austria regained her independence, the Austrian Government expelled the WFTU, charging that the WFTU's operations endangered Austrian neutrality.

### Propaganda

As a Communist front organization, the WFTU has been used as a channel for the spreading of Communist propaganda throughout the world. Ever since the Communists took over the WFTU in 1949, the Federation has carried on an extensive and costly publications program. The most important of its publications is the World Trade Union Movement, a monthly magazine whose editorial formula includes commentary, texts or speeches and reports on the activities of affiliated organizations. In theory, it is supposed to be a trade union journal. However, much of what it prints is political in character and it is the Federation's main vehicle for attacks against non-Communist governments, institutions and organizations. It is published in 11 languages.

The Secretariat has also published a pamphlet series of which 21 booklets have appeared since 1949, reflecting the WFTU's major propaganda efforts. In addition to this, the Trade Union Internationals which are an integral part of the WFTU, also publish their own bulletins in various languages. The greater part of the expense of these publications is lavished on countries in which the WFTU has little or no membership. It is, therefore, clear that the pamphlets cannot be considered as being a service to that membership. While some 90 percent of the WFTU's members are recruited in Communist-dominated countries, the two largest affiliates being Russian and Red Chinese, the Russian and Chinese editions of World Trade Union Movement do not exceed 10,000 copies each. If additional proof of the propaganda function of these publications were needed it is only necessary to point out that they consistently ignore political or trade union developments within the Soviet Bloc.

### Membership

When the Fourth World Trade Union Congress met in Leipzig in October 1957, its Communist sponsors claimed that a total of 105,770,820 workers from 80 countries were represented

by delegates and that of this total only some 13,500,000 were not directly affiliated with the WFTU. This assertion would put the officially claimed membership of the WFTU and its Trade Union Internationals in the neighborhood of 90,000,000. However, these claims are not reliable and there is no way of checking them since about 90 percent of claimed membership is represented by trade unions within the Communist Bloc.

There are only indirect ways of approximating WFTU strength in the non-Communist world. Before the democratic unions abandoned the WFTU it had a claimed membership of 75,072,560. By the end of January 1949, membership had declined to 57,576,260 and continued to drop because the great majority of the 48,000,000 trade unionists who formed the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in November 1949 were former members of the WFTU. Nevertheless, when the Communist-dominated congress of the WFTU met in Milan in July 1949, the organization claimed a membership of 71,786,515 which would have represented a paper loss of only about 4,300,000 when, in fact, and by its own figures, the loss had been 18,500,000 within the first month following the rift.

#### Targets

At present the WFTU is making its most energetic bid for support in the Asian and African countries. There, it is easier to disguise the fact that all the trade union principles professed by the WFTU are systematically violated in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China, that workers do not have the right to strike, that they cannot join unions of their own choice and that they do not have a 40-hour week. In these countries it is also easier to enter the political arena on the pretext of defending the worker's interests and by the skillful exploitation of poverty, nationalism and economic underdevelopment.

Whatever its professed ideals, the WFTU is solely an instrument of Soviet policy and a tactical weapon in the war of infiltration and subversion. The WFTU is not alone in this role and there are many other Communist front organizations for women, youth, lawyers, journalists and teachers. The Soviet Union and the other Communist states either participate directly in them or are represented by trusted Communists from other countries. All of them are financed by the Soviet Government.

The Communist elements within the WFTU professed respect and friendship for the democratic unions of the Western world. But they were unmasked and isolated from the free unions whereupon they made the cause of Soviet dictatorship their own by using the organization they had captured as an instrument of disruption and propaganda.